

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

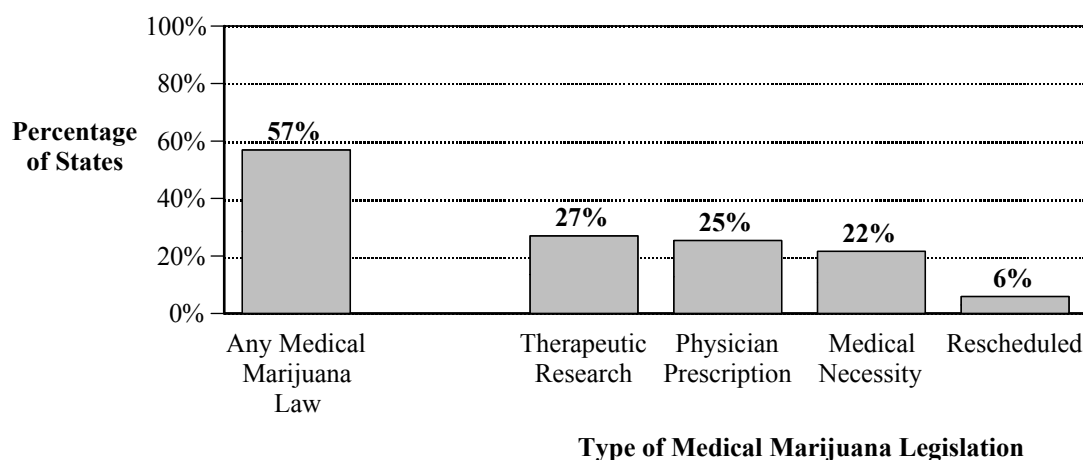
University of Maryland, College Park

More Than One-Half of U.S. States Have Medical Marijuana Laws

Twenty-eight states and the District of Columbia currently have one or more laws that enable the medical use of marijuana. The most common type of medical marijuana law—enacted in 14 (27%) states—protects physicians, pharmacies and patients involved in federally-approved therapeutic research programs (TPRS). Another thirteen states (25%) have physician prescription laws that protect physicians who prescribe marijuana or discuss its medicinal value to their patients. This law is often coupled with medical necessity laws. Eleven states (22%) currently have such laws, allowing patients or caregivers to obtain marijuana upon a physician's recommendation and providing them with a defense from state prosecution for use and/or possession of marijuana for medical purposes. Finally, three states (6%) have rescheduled marijuana from a Schedule I drug to a lower class when used medicinally. Of these four types of medical marijuana laws, only therapeutic research programs law are currently consistent with federal statutes.

Percentage of States with Medical Marijuana Legislation (as of May 31, 2003)

(N=50 states and the District of Columbia)



NOTE: Therapeutic Research: AL, CA, GA, IL, MA, MN, NJ, NM, NY, RI, SC, TX, VT, WA.
Physician Prescription: AK, AZ, CA, CO, CT, HI, LA, ME, NH, OR, VA, WA, WI.
Medical Necessity: AK, CA, CO, CT, HI, ME, MD, NV, OR, VA, WA.
Rescheduled: AK, DC, IA.

SOURCES: Adapted by CESAR from Drug Policy Research Center, "How State Medical Marijuana Laws Vary: A Comprehensive Review," *DPRC Research Brief*, 2003. Available online (<http://www.rand.org/publications/RB/RB6012/>) and Pacula R.L., Chiriqui J.F., Reichmann D.A., Terry-McElrath Y.M. *State Medical Marijuana Laws: Understanding the Laws and their Limitations*, *ImpactTEEN* 13, 2001. Available online (http://www.impactteen.org/ab_medicalmarijuana102001.htm).

• 301-403-8329 (voice) • 301-403-8342 (fax) • CESAR@cesar.umd.edu • www.cesar.umd.edu •

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